

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 20, 2004

**CONTACT: Mark Bayer or
David Moulton
(202) 225-2836**

LAWMAKERS SEEK ANSWERS TO SUNDAY'S CARNIVAL RIDE FATALITY IN MASSACHUSETTS

Washington, DC: Reps. Edward Markey (D-MA), Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Richard Neal (D-MA) today sent a letter to the chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission asking the agency to assist the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as it investigates the causes of the fatality on the "Sizzler", a whirling amusement park ride that broke apart yesterday during a church picnic in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts. One man was killed and two others were injured in the accident.

"The Commonwealth has primary jurisdiction over the investigation of this accident," said the congressmen, "but as you know, in situations like this, the CPSC, as the nation's premier consumer safety agency with jurisdiction over mobile amusement park rides, provides a unique perspective when it comes to ensuring that the accident investigation benefits from what is already known from similar ride accident investigations and, following the investigation, that the lessons learned here are shared widely within the industry and among manufacturers and operators."

Rep. Markey, author of the National Amusement Park Ride Safety Act, a bill to improve the oversight of amusement park rides throughout the United States, added "for the sake of the riders who have been injured and for the children who may ride this or similar rides in the future, this accident should be investigated thoroughly. We are asking the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), which has jurisdiction over carnival rides, to assist the state in getting to the bottom of this tragedy as soon as possible.

"Statistics gathered by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) suggest that more accidents occur on whirling, spinning rides than any other type except roller coasters," said Markey. "While many amusement park ride accidents are blamed on rider error, initial reports in this case suggest some catastrophic mechanical failure. Hundreds of rides just like this one operate throughout the United States every day. We must find out why these machines flew apart so that the manufacturers and/of the operators make sure this never happens again."